

3,200-Acre Acquisition Establishes the Graysville Mountain Resource Management Area of the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail

Governor Phil Bredesen and Department of Environment and Conservation Commissioner Jim Fyke recently closed on a land acquisition that will add more than 3,200 acres and 10 linear miles of trail to the Cumberland Trail State Park in Hamilton and Rhea counties. The acquisition was funded through a variety of sources, including a grant from the Heritage Conservation Trust Fund, federal grants and private funds raised by the Cumberland Trail Conference. It includes a significant conservation easement put in place by the Land Trust for Tennessee. "This acquisition speaks to the power of leveraging resources and cultivating partnerships to accomplish more than we could do alone," said Bredesen. "I'm pleased that a variety of agencies and organizations were able to come together to accomplish an acquisition that will benefit Tennesseans for generations to come."

The property on Graysville Mountain is part of Tennessee's Cumberland Trail State Park. It will allow the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail to expand between Dayton, in Rhea County, and Sale Creek in Hamilton County. The area provides opportunities for fishing, day hiking, whitewater paddling, swimming, rock climbing and trail running. "Not only will the Graysville Mountain acquisition protect priority land and natural resources, it also represents an important piece of the Cumberland Trail," said Fyke. "Under Governor Bredesen's leadership, we have made considerable progress on the trail, increasing the acreage managed by the Cumberland Trail State Park from 1,200 acres to 23,000 acres since 2003." The project is funded with more than \$3.5 million in federal grants and a \$1 million grant from the state's Heritage Conservation Trust Fund from Fiscal Year 2007-2008. The Cumberland Trail Conference will contribute up to \$300,000 in private funds for administrative costs. The Land Trust for Tennessee assisted in negotiating the transaction with the seller, Richard Kinzalow, and will hold a permanent conservation easement on the 2,197 acres located in Rhea County. The project marks the Land Trust's first in Rhea County and places a total of more than 5,000 acres under easement managed by the Land Trust in Southeast Tennessee.

"The Land Trust for Tennessee is thrilled to be a partner on this wonderful conservation project that will forever protect the incredible biodiversity of the unique, irreplaceable cove ecosystem along Walden Ridge," said Executive Director Jeanie Nelson. "We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the state of Tennessee and Mr. Kinzalow on this landmark acquisition, and the permanent contribution to the future generations of Tennesseans that it signifies."

The Cumberland Trail Conference, a non-profit organization that assists the state in a variety of efforts related to the continuing development of the Cumberland Trail, raised money to assist with this acquisition during its, *Pathways for People, People for Nature* capital campaign. "We appreciate all the donors, volunteers and CTC staff that contributed and worked to execute a very successful fundraiser," said Tony Hook, Manager of the Cumberland Trail Conference. "It is because of their efforts that the CTC was able to assist with this land purchase to expand the reach of the Cumberland Trail."

About the Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail

Upon completion, the Cumberland Trail, the state's only linear park, will cut through 11 Tennessee counties from the Cumberland Gap National Historic Park on the Tennessee-Virginia-Kentucky border to the Signal Point near Chattanooga. More than one hundred and fifty miles of the Cumberland Trail is currently open and ready for exploration. For more information on the Cumberland Trail State Park and Scenic Trail, visit www.tnstateparks.com.

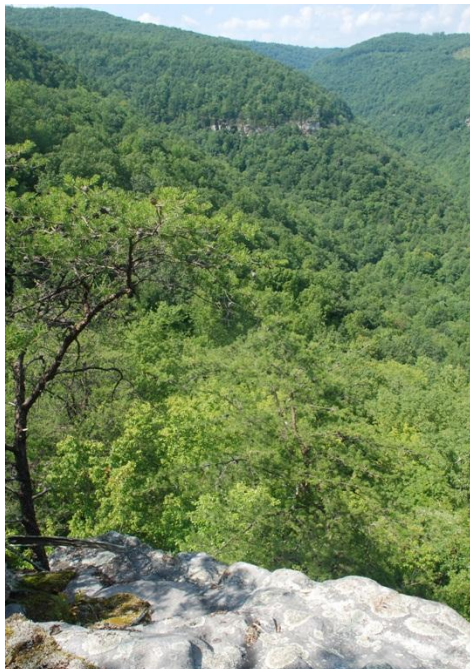
About the Cumberland Trail Conference

The Cumberland Trail Conference is an affiliate organization of the non-profit Tennessee Trails Association. The CTC is dedicated to the establishment and development of the Cumberland Trail. Since 1997, the Conference has assisted with land acquisitions, volunteer organization, trail construction and trail maintenance. Working with park staff, the CTC has constructed and maintained more than 100 miles of the Cumberland Trail to date. For more information, visit www.cumberlandtrail.org.

About the Land Trust for Tennessee

The Land Trust for Tennessee is a private, not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, founded in 1999. Its mission is to preserve the unique character of Tennessee's natural and historic landscapes for future generations. To date, the Land Trust for Tennessee has protected more than 50,000 acres of land and is working with numerous other landowners across the state. The Land Trust works with willing landowners to find ways to preserve forever the historic, scenic and natural values of their land. The organization is supported primarily by financial contributions from individuals. The Land Trust has offices in Nashville, Sewanee and Chattanooga. More information is available at www.landtrusttn.org.

[Click here](#) to read Knoxville *News Sentinel* Editorial, “Land Deals Help Protect State’s Vistas”



Roaring Creek Gorge
Graysville Mountain Resource Management Area of the
Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail
Photo courtesy of Bob Fulcher



View from Coulterville Road
Graysville Mountain Resource Management Area of the
Cumberland Trail State Scenic Trail
Photo courtesy of Bob Fulcher